

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL NATO CAPITALS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

XMT AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 079411

FOLLOWING REPEAT BONN 4809 ACTION STATE INFO MOSCOW GENEVA MAR 16.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 4809

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECE, ENRG, GW

SUBJ: ECE - TREATMENT OF BREZHNEV PROPOSAL FOR AN
ENERGY CONFERENCE

REF: (A) STATE 59551 (B) GENEVA 3446 (C) 77 BONN 14026

1. FRG ALSO RE-EVALUATING POSITION ON PROPOSAL IN LIGHT
OF BELGRADE OUTCOME. BASIC FRG POSITION DESCRIBED
REF (C) AND PREVIOUS IS NOW IN STATE OF FLUX, WITH
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ECONOMICS MINISTRY, FOREIGN OFFICE AND CHANCELLOR'S
OFFICE EACH TAKING SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT LINE.

2. ECONOMICS MINISTRY VIEW IS THAT THERE IS NO NEED FOR
UN ENERGY CONFERENCE AT HIGH LEVELS IN ECE AT
THIS TIME. ARGUMENT IS THAT THIS WOULD "REWARD"
RUSSIANS UNDESERVEDLY. IN ADDITION, CONFERENCE COULD

LEAD TO PRESSURE FOR WEST TO COMMIT ITSELF TO PROJECTS IN THE EAST OR TO TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY. MINISTRY BELIEVES THAT THESE DECISIONS SHOULD BE LEFT TO PRIVATE BUSINESS.

3. THE FOREIGN OFFICE VIEWS THE SITUATION IN A LONGER TERM CONTEXT. THEY FEEL THAT, SOONER OR LATER, THE WEST WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE RUSSIANS ON ENERGY. IN THE YEARS AHEAD, THE ENERGY RESOURCES (OIL AND GAS) OF THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH NOW PROVIDE MOST OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR EASTERN EUROPE, WILL BECOME MORE SCARCE. THIS COULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO CUTBACKS ON DELIVERIES OF SOVIET FOSSIL FUEL ENERGY TO BOTH EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE. ANTICIPATING THIS SITUATION IS IMPORTANT, SAYS THE FOREIGN OFFICE, AND ONE WAY OF GETTING A DIALOG GOING IS TO ENCOURAGE EAST-WEST DISCUSSIONS. THE ECE SEEMED A CONVENIENT PLACE BECAUSE OF THE MIXTURE OF COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN IT AND BECAUSE OF THE ECE'S BACKGROUND EXPERTISE.

4. THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE PLACES ITS EMPHASIS ON THE POLITICAL ASPECTS AND POSSIBLE RESULTS OF THE PROPOSAL. CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT REPORTEDLY VIEWS THE PROPOSAL AS POSITIVE IN THAT IT WOULD HELP KEEP THE SPIRIT OF DETENTE ALIVE AND SECOND THAT IT MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE HELPFUL IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM OF CONFIDENTIAL

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PROVIDING ENERGY TO BERLIN. THE CHANCELLOR DID CONSIDER THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE OF SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE TO RAISE IT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AT THEIR MEETING LAST JULY.

5. ON MONDAY, MARCH 13, ECE SECRETARY GENERAL STANOVNIK CAME TO BONN AND SPOKE TO ECONOMICS MINISTER LAMBSDORFF AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM SEVERAL OTHER MINISTRIES. STANOVNIK SUGGESTED TWO ALTERNATIVES FOR CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSIONS WITHIN THE ECE ON THE SUBJECT OF ENERGY: FIRST, INTENSIFICATION OF ONGOING STUDIES ON ENERGY WITHIN THE ECE; SECOND, FORMATION OF A HIGH-LEVEL (SENIOR ADVISORS) GROUP TO DEAL SPECIFICALLY WITH ENERGY QUESTIONS. WHILE FRG POLICY IS NOT YET DEFINITE, THE GENERAL GERMAN REACTION TO STANOVNIK'S SUGGESTIONS WAS NON-COMMITAL. THE GERMANS DO NOT HAVE THEIR OWN POSITION CLEARED AMONG THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES YET; IN ADDITION, THEY EXPECT THAT THE SUBJECT WILL BE DISCUSSED ON FRIDAY THE 17TH WITHIN THE EC.

6. SUMMARIZING THE PROVISIONAL FRG POSITION WOULD

GO AS FOLLOWS: THE FRG WOULD PROBABLY NOT SUPPORT AN INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON ENERGY A LA BREZHNEV NOW; THEY OPPOSE THE STANOVNIK SUGGESTION OF ESTABLISHING A NEW HIGH LEVEL GROUP WITHIN THE ECE TO DEAL WITH ENERGY; THEY MIGHT GO ALONG WITH INTENSIFIED STUDIES THERE.

7. THE FOREIGN OFFICE POINTED OUT THAT ONE EVENT WHICH MIGHT CAUSE THE FRG TO CHANGE ITS MIND ON A CONFERENCE WOULD BE A VISIT BY BREZHNEV TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. AT THAT POINT, THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE COULD DECIDE IT NEEDED TO ACCEPT THE BREZHNEV PROPOSAL IN SOME FORM AS A "SWEETENER" FOR THE MEETING.

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8. FRG OFFICIALS ARE ANXIOUS TO HAVE US VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT. PTLASE ADVISE. MEEHAN UNQUOTE COOPER

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